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C O N F I D E N T I A L OTTAWA 000702

SIPDIS

PARIS FOR UNESCO OBSERVER; MARSEILLES FOR MONACO

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/13/2013

TAGS: [AORC](#) [CA](#) [UNESCO](#)

SUBJECT: CANADA TO PURSUE UNESCO EXECUTIVE BOARD SEAT

REF: A. STATE 61697

[1](#)B. STATE 54900

Classified By: Acting Political Counselor Mary Witt for reasons 1.5(b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (C) Embassy presented the talking points contained reftel A concerning the U.S. candidacy for election to the UNESCO executive board to Jean-Luc Chouinard, Special Advisor for UNESCO in the UN Specialized Agencies Section of DFAIT's International Organizations Bureau, on March 11. Poloff had a follow-up discussion with Chouinard on March 13. Chouinard said that Canada welcomes the U.S.'s return to UNESCO.

[1](#)2. (C) Chouinard indicated Canada will be a candidate for a seat on the UNESCO executive board. He said Canada would like our support for its candidacy, and will seriously consider giving its support to our candidacy. Chouinard said there are a possible 10 candidates for the 5 open Group 1 seats on the executive board. He identified those candidates as France, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, Monaco, Portugal, Switzerland, Denmark, the U.S., and Canada. When asked about the possibility of Canada supporting a consensus slate of candidates, Chouinard responded that experience has shown them that such slates aren't successful in UNESCO executive board elections. Chouinard said the culture of UNESCO isn't conducive to slates of candidates; in that sense, he noted, UNESCO differs from other UN organizations.

[1](#)3. (C) Chouinard shares our concern that a better balance needs to be established in Group 1 board representation between EU and non-E.U. states. He feels this will be hard to do in the near term, but in the longer term we should work on getting the Group 1 states to agree on a different, more balanced approach to filling seats. Chouinard is hopeful there will be a place for both the U.S. and Canada on the executive board, as he thinks we could do a lot of useful things if we are serving together. Comment: It is our impression from the discussion with Chouinard that Canada might agree to join a consensus slate, or to back a consensus slate, after other possible members of the slate have been identified. End comment.

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